

FIRST READING: Micah 7:14-15, 18-20

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Micah:

Shepherd your people with your staff, the flock of your inheritance, That dwells apart in a woodland, in the midst of Carmel. Let them feed in Bashan and Gilead, as in the days of old; As in the days when you came from the land of Egypt, show us wonderful signs. Who is there like you, the God who removes guilt and pardons sin for the remnant of his inheritance; Who does not persist in anger forever, but delights rather in clemency, And will again have compassion on us, treading underfoot our guilt? You will cast into the depths of the sea all our sins; You will show faithfulness to Jacob, and grace to Abraham, As you have sworn to our fathers from days of old.

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL: Psalm 85:2-4, 5-6, 7-8

Lord, show us your mercy and love.

You have favored, O LORD, your land; you have brought back the captives of Jacob. You have forgiven the guilt of your people; you have covered all their sins. You have withdrawn all your wrath; you have revoked your burning anger.

Lord, show us your mercy and love.

Restore us, O God our savior, and abandon your displeasure against us. Will you be ever angry with us, prolonging your anger to all generations?

Lord, show us your mercy and love.

Will you not instead give us life; and shall not your people rejoice in you? Show us, O LORD, your kindness, and grant us your salvation.

Lord, show us your mercy and love.

Gospel: Matthew 12:46-50

+ A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew:

While Jesus was speaking to the crowds, his mother and his brothers appeared outside, wishing to speak with him. Someone told him, "Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, asking to speak with you." But he said in reply to the one who told him, "Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?" And stretching out his hand toward his disciples, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of my heavenly Father is my brother, and sister, and mother."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Reflection for the 15th Tuesday of the Year II

Take a look of the context of God's message to king Ahaz. The attack of Israel, the Northern Kingdom, and Aram had already failed. Isaiah did not prophesy about Jerusalem's salvation from attack. Judah, the Southern Kingdom had already prevailed against their enemies. Isaiah prophesied that Israel and its capital, Samaria, would be destroyed by the Assyrians and the people being carried off into Diaspora as booty. His message is for the citizens of Jerusalem and all of Judah to be firm in faith and live as God's people. Unlike the response for today's psalm, it's not the city that God upholds forever. It's God's people.

We, Divine Savior, Our Lady Mother of the Church and St. Eugene have closed. God upholds us as members of Christ's Church, not the places where we worship together. The people of God, united in faith, Word and Sacrament constitute the Church. God's concerned with us gathering in Jesus' name, not our real estate. God has saved flesh and blood, not bricks and mortar. Our fellowship takes place within four walls, but it's our gathering together that brings Jesus into our midst.

I have always wondered why people who witnessed Jesus' mighty works, miracles and preaching didn't come to faith. We've never heard Jesus speak or saw his miracles and we believe? Faith is a gift from God that God gives in God's own time. The Catholic Church defines faith as, "ascent to truth." But God's living grace and the guidance of the Holy Spirit helps us to make the climb. This is something that, as believers, we need to remember as we encounter those who have not yet received God's gift. Instead of nagging them to faith or reasoning with them to believe, we can place them into God's loving arms and invite them as Jesus invited his disciples to follow him. We can always rely on God; his Word is good. God's Word reveals God's nature to us. God is infinite, eternal and unconditional love.

This is the second week of the new and yet unnamed parish. This Sunday we had another priest celebrate Sunday mass. The five of us will rotate from now on. I had mass at Our Lady Mother last Sunday. I will celebrate mass at St. Eugene this coming Saturday evening. And will be back at Divine Savior on the 24th. Please consider rotating, too, and get to know the rest of our new congregation. It's not our location; it's the community that gathers together in Jesus' name that builds the Church.

May our way to Christ always be straight and with one another.

James D. Beath
July 12, 2022